Seek

Metal Femme

TRANS WOMEN WRITERS COLLECTIVE

Metal Femme
Seek

Trans Women Writers Collective – Booklet Series #5
Cover image: Carved Bead (Jadeite), Met Museum.

TABLE OF CONTENTS • SEEK

a birthplace of worn tempests and jade crystals • 5-6
unraveling urbanised desire • 7
machines re/made in the vision of reimagination • 8
skins • 9
gridlock • 10
pornotropics • 11
suspension of bodies • 12
trimurtis • 13-14
pick • 15
on being present • 16
abolitionofthesoul • 17-18
ghosts • 19
wars that neatly fold in on themselves • 20
a gentle orb of a shawl and a halo of mango juice • 21-22

a birthplace of worn tempests and jade crystals

i wear a tempest down
into the whisper of a jasmine blossom
floating unaware into
materially interconnected
lagoons of lies
pooling with the sureness
of monsoon season
i cry because of the atlas
woven into the hairs on my skin
each follicle
recounting a million stories of my ancestry,
lost, my hairs fall off too
after which i pick them off and question them
how is my birthplace
misnamed despair?
built upon mud and loss
my motherland demands
explanations for why the lands i tread
remain so colonised and so desolate

i cry out nothingness to appeal
for broken mirrors and
unwanted vulnerability in
an attempt to

see god in tantric devotion
and tell her to lay down the rock
of divine commotion

so she whispers to me that
i am round cheeked like my mother
because i hold moons of despair
within my mouth, and i keep myself busy
lolling my tongue for syllables of home
but am unable to find any
like how my mother was unable to find
her fingerprints which lash out for a

sea god i wonder if there is any conch
in the world that could conjure
an infinite answer to the definite question of
how to bring a definite end to infinite suffering?
until the tempest builds itself again to
wash itself over jade crystals of longing and exile

unraveling urbanised desire

how the city
lies limp in its infinity!
where the
traffic is a confluence
of knives and oceans and
cruise lines. please say
goodbye.
but how do you bid
farewell to fond
blurred memory of
post it traffic signals and
jack-o-lantern cabs?

there is nothing more
majestic than unpeeled oranges
in dumpsters! oh i can't wait
until academia
unravels my atoms.

machines re/made in the vision of reimagination

distributing archives
like extension of bodies,
celebrating transience
like acceptance of truths.
chop up corpses
and form intimate bonds
instead of creating art.
dialectical history
constructs beauty,
reimagining how hybrid
bodies can be
and reimagining lives
in which being vulnerable is
distributing archives.

skins

been feeling weary of my own skin
as i keep existing without feeling
threading through my hair
to find bits and gunks of
self exiled memories tumbling out into--
snowballing
    into--
    waves of fundamental
    wrong and imperial time
    coming out clutched in
    crescents of sunlight
melting on glass tongues
criss crossed at the border with
alchemies of melancholy
aligning so the pain froths over forgiveness.
don't need reflection
when the body turns into metal.

gridlock

fleshliness
is how we embody the world
but corporeality is simulated
in a cosmos of
synchronised bodiless movements.
get rid of the skin
the bones
and the tendons in between
nothing but the soul fragment
left
between jagged and locked teeth
gritting music and lives of disidentifying
bodies
on the street.
no control or reconciliation
over life and death
revolving in limbo
as the reworking
of materiality.

pornotropics

pornotropics of pakistani dusk
watch it respectably wrap
the roads in imperialist dust
cloak it all
watch the sun settle into battery acid
too soon.
unalign the mercury under tongues
so it can be realigned with orientalism
trying to divorce suicide from patricide
trying to divorce rosewater from oil laden nipples
getting lost on artery roads
and becoming genotyped journey instead.
evading contoured enigmas and mango seeds
in liminal space between orange flames and
partitioned homes.

trying to tiptoe around glass and brown sugar
but there are no exotic women starcrossed with henna
in the museum of forgotten promises

suspension of bodies

revolutions cooked
from sandalwood scented
years lining bone
estranged from workers
into alien commodity

so i keep
seeking punctured perfection
In the wake of mud
trying to tongue out universal oneness
In the pearling of
bodies floating
        floating
                floating
congealed on freshwater

so like wind i must howl down
as the smash of dynastic swords
and interweave as layers of membrane, chai,
and *hajj*.
if only we could measure time through healing crystals,
hymns of the last flood
        and the absence of injuries.

trimurtis

charting out
bordered bloodlines
with your red stoned
fingers greedy with ochre
and heavy with remorse
from consensual genocide

a liminality where confessions and horoscopes
roll off the tongue
In aquamarine ontologies
and orange assemblages
of shan jelly and homonationalisms
If the sun begins with the utterance of
3 phrases filling the gaps between
3 deliberate borders of the heart;
3 liminal spaces
then it must be easy to disidentify and
reinvent synchronisis
and diachronisis into
dialectical understanding
of capacious shrouds

sharing multiple displacements
somewhere between truth and soil
is a meaning of inescapable violence

in a one word
neocapitalist matrix,

it is easy to understand
how architecture, reification, and genocides uphold
the skeletons of *trimurtis*
within each liminal space

pick

pick securitizations of movement
apart like viral affects.
scavenging through memories
of marble jungles melting under feet
so reinvention of queer
would destroy the word queer
so kaminae envision diasporic subjectivities
as contingent reimagining of
temporal processes
breathes fluidly like
silence of impassioned waves
and kisses from the moon.

you summon
those hordes of marble
underneath warm monsoon feet
yet find yourself caught
between hopeful beginnings and
militarized ends.
forgetting that
provincial plum seeds
get stuck in undeserving throats
and tongues cannot
always rely on prophecies

on being present

being present when
you wish to disappear
is like being intimately familiar
with every single exit wound in your
body. because being vulnerable
is being consensually corporeal
ready for hymn
we dream of a battle in which
we're huddled in occupied corridors
trying to figure out which stolen land
we drink peach and pink moscato on

in a confirmation of
tenderness
frozen carcasses of plastic
and earth
light themselves
as the incense of dysfunctional states
our manifestos begin with a moment

of movement

abolitionofthesoul

prison abolition *begins*
with abolition of the self.
prison abolition begins
when eyelids flutter
with intimacy thinking about
illusory faultlines and
the brain freezes
when reminiscing
icy red lullabies of the dead

prison is how latticeworks
of racialised, gendered, and classist
subjectivities masquerade
as plantations of security
when they're really just plantations

it is the year of gemini and it is imperative
to fling out prisons, dry love,
and architectures of convenience
Into necessary departure

impossible holy temple.
brutalist style makes uneasy communion with
genesis and punitive justice
impossible tides transubstantiate

into impossible revolution.

subvert colonial mapping,
kill fascists who build pipelines,
unstick certain bodies
from certain places
by allowing them to create counter terrains
of their own.

ghosts

ghost hands touch
ghost skin for
ghost memories
of ghost nations
where you were
a ghost citizen.
your life is a cemetery
and assimilation was
the obituary.

wars that neatly fold in on themselves

transparent wars
ebb neatly out of pockets
onto sidewalks
with the same humility of
petals withering off
flower stems like
severed tongues
lying limp in reply
to the cleave and heave
of earth. withered petals carry
exiled memories to the airport
while masala spices
at ethnic storefronts carry
mixed blisters of love and prophecy
into open windows of kitchens,
instilling cold veins of mothers with
the sustenance to cook
and the pain to forget.

a gentle orb of a shawl and a halo of mango juice

fold shawl
into the breeze neatly
floating heap of earth
into orb of rose orange
'arre' i apologise
that i flee i flee i flee
your lies like
the subalternity
that is a trick question
i feed you probabilities
of animation
spoon you
some coconut milk
hold you close to my
star heavy nipple breast
i sigh with inability
to move on
fold shawl
drape over my eyes
neatly
into floating heap of earth
how fantastic
mango juice tastes

when it is deconstructed
into pornotropic
of consciousness

Metal Femme

Metal Femme
Give Yourself a Self and Other Poems on Healing

Trans Women Writers Collective – Booklet Series #5
Illustration by Metal Femme and Asharah Saraswati.

TABLE OF CONTENTS • GIVE YOURSELF A SELF

deepen ur wounds • 26
palpitate • 27
healing takes time • 28
necks, backs, and the temporality in between • 29
give yourself a self • 30
life during monsoons • 31
alphabet sorrow • 32
escapism as a first resort • 33
incision upon incision • 34
ghosts in the past • 35
so thank you • 36
accepting the unfairness of time and trauma • 37
there is everlasting love and divinity in friendship • 38
linguistics of erotic expressions • 39

deepen ur wounds

it's like u held apocalypse in ur hands;
all the green grief.
trying to rush through it,
bracing for cascades of epiphany
to drench u with sorrow
when you ran out the cave.
trying to pass on loss to someone else
        but you must know
        that pain cannot be passed on
        and neither can the growth
        you experienced from it.
u look at me as your own daughter,
        tears in your eyes,
and tell me that in order to heal
i'll have to deepen my wounds.

palpitate

four chambers of the heart
four phases of my life
abuse, trauma, abuse, growth
open and close
grow and flow
with each swell
i get a little closer
toward where it hurts

healing takes time

sometimes i don't wanna heal
or want trauma scars to fade.
sometimes my skin turns from bronze to grey.

but i have to remember that it's okay to feel
even though sometimes it's hard to exist and
feel real

necks, backs, and the temporality in between

i can text back
levitate even
glistening in satin brown skin
soft as sheets, light as the lies i tell
when you hit it from the back
back back back into
discursive temporality.
didn't i tell you time was imperial?
arching pussy out into celestial orb
flexing my carpal bones
feeling stretchiness in my skin membrane
and find desire and riot in the anarchy
of ugliness

give yourself a self

love demands time
to break bAorders and
to build bridges.
so give yourself time and
the honour to love.
so give yourself the care
to love your own soul
and oneness of existence.

i feel tangibility in emotion
in my heart and in my mother's heart
and the many hearts of women
before us whose histories are erased.
we have always been building
a destiny coalescing
the soul with
the metaphysicality
of growth.
through our labour,
through our love,
through our sorrow,
and through our joy.

life during monsoon

what a beautiful monsoon storm
wishing to exist
in perpetuation.
make hundred year old trees bend over
to touch
the glimmer of lightning.
let the rain cleanse and coalesce with
my soul.
draining
and letting the frogs
keep what is left
of the cool winter breeze
in the middle of summer.
a source of life and destruction.

alphabet sorrow

crying out two alphabets of sorrow
of longing and regret.
cleansing
salt spray from whiteness
and racial melancholia
off your cheeks.
speaking in tongues
gave you many heads
but no direction
so you wandered aimlessly
without a home like a fugitive
from your own soul.

this time you said you needed time

so you tore apart temporality
and birthed
resistance
from your nostrils,
exhaling
tendrils of truth
and recognizing
that movement is natural.

escapism as a first resort

here and there
there and back to here
waiting to believe
back there
and wanting to believe
back here
escapism
back to the ground
and back to the
brown women who
can find it hard to read there
but find it easy to feel here

incision upon incision

cut into stomach of the earth
warm womb brown
with tenderness and healing
enough so
the white people can
steal it in lanterns
to cast shadows on our faces.
drawing maps of our places.
they are not used to darkness like us,
its holy humility cloaking us
like a mother protecting her child
from the wickedness of
some bizarre colonised cosmos.
from ashes of the earth's core
thus let our children emerge
like warriors and poets and lovers
ready to speak love into existence.
make sure you don't crush me
for i too was made of the same ash as you
knowing you in the womb of primordial chaos
wreaked havoc upon by the labyrinth of whiteness
in similar ways as you have been.

ghosts in the past

we learn through distance
that to be with family is to absorb its memories
and to retrace textiles of its past
winding upon the surface of the earth
like the river ravi
nursing water buffaloes and trees of winding despair
sprinkling leaves like memories
of neo-colonialism and partition.
fingers roughing over textures of present and
coarseness of a shawl's unfinished edges
where the ghosts still linger
and where memories of violence never really faded away.

so thank you

so thank you for
letting me shave my pubes on your toilet
unapologetically,
shedding my soul too,
leaving behind the old me who refused to know herself.

every shear my razor makes
is a chaos of cathartic triumph
trumpeting in through your window
with the morning breeze of a million wishes
whispering through my sheer shirt
i bought at a trade in thrift store
where i got trade too.

i killed the past me on your kitchen floor
and imbued her essence into
a prayer for our house, for our beings,
for our simultaneous futurity and end in queerness

i scream in antagonistic joy,
across every rooftop and ocean,
i'm a fucking faggot,
and that i've never felt
more… ME
and that i never will

accepting the unfairness of time and trauma

how lonely it feels to be exiled
from your own self,
dispossessed of your tongue
as if you can't heal on your own.
the pain inside me spreading,
like the roots
of a tree which has never touched the ground,
around my body
and dividing me into
fractions and partitions
of desire
and uneasiness.
cultures split at the edges
of continents and rifts,
unable to be reconciled for years
and becoming closer yet deeper
over migratory subjectivity.
now i create architecture to hold
the heavy weight of intergenerational trauma
and memories of diaspora fruit.
easing myself into the crazed erotics of temporality
never felt so chaotic
never felt so good

there is everlasting love and divinity in friendship and within and outside of my body too

love is a balm for healing.
help heal the pain in each other
through friendship
and intimacy reclaimed
from the stakes of being cultural capital.
i don't know love
but i honor it
and i respect it
so when i found myself
at the lowest of lows
i found honor within myself
and i became a lover without a body
and a lover unrestrained by space or time.

linguistics of erotic expressions

develop linguistics of erotic expressions
erased from racialised, masculinised nationalism
within the subcontinent and diaspora.
culturally specific non normative
deviation is accidental yet purposeful
whirling away from globalisation and neoliberalism.
rejecting the uniform colonial rewriting
of genders and histories
requires new language to describe
the other.
crafting networks of connection
and interpersonal relations
echoing a qawwali
enjoining with a oneness
and coalescing queerness with god